

Application No: 16/01041/FULL Full Application

Site: Meadowbank Farm, Ringwood Road, Woodlands, Southampton, SO40 7GX

Proposal: Replacement facilities building; new studio building; demolition of 3 No. outbuildings.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Hood

Case Officer: Katie McIntyre

Parish: NETLEY MARSH

1. REASON FOR COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

Contrary to Parish Council view

2. DEVELOPMENT PLAN DESIGNATION

No specific designation

3. PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

DP1 General Development Principles
DP6 Design Principles
CP8 Local Distinctiveness
CP14 Business and Employment Development
DP19 Re-use of Buildings outside the Defined Villages
DP17 Extensions to Non Residential Buildings and Uses

4. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

Not applicable

5. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Sec 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy
Sec 7 - Requiring good design
Sec 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

6. MEMBER COMMENTS

None received

7. PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

Netley Marsh Parish Council: Recommend permission:

the plans are an improvement on the existing buildings

8. CONSULTTEES

8.1 Highway Authority (HCC): No objection.

8.2 Highways England: No comments received.

9. REPRESENTATIONS

9.1 None received.

10. RELEVANT HISTORY

10.1 Retention of raised field levels (04/82268) granted permission on 18 October 2004

10.2 New storage barn; demolition of 2 No. outbuildings (16/01042) concurrent application

11. ASSESSMENT

11.1 The application site consists of a chalet bungalow and open fields (approximately 5 acres) which are situated outside the defined New Forest villages. The property is accessed via a single width road and is located at the end of this track set back from Ringwood Road. The access track also serves several other properties. There are three existing barns serving the site which are the subject of this application and one field is used as a certified location site for 5 caravans. It would appear from the planning history that the site was once used as a mink farm and aerial photographs have been submitted as part of the supporting documentation showing extensive areas of buildings at the site. It is apparent that this use has been ceased for some time and majority of these buildings no longer exist. It is not known when these buildings were demolished however aerial photographs of the site dated 1999 show only the existing buildings remaining at the site being in situ at this time.

11.2 This application consists of two separate proposals. The first being the replacement of the existing facilities building serving the certified location site with a smaller building, and secondly the demolition of the existing barn which is in a poor state of repair and its replacement with a building of a similar footprint to be used as a studio building. Supporting information has been included with the application with regards to the use of the proposed studio building. This would be used by the applicant (it is not proposed for any other staff to be employed) to provide 8-10 treatments per week such as aromatherapy massage and colonic hydrotherapy. As well as this the building would include a demonstration / preparation area for various workshops such as cookery, art classes, meditation and yoga consisting of small groups of people

(4-6). Treatments and workshops would be available to both members of the public and those staying at the site. No changes are proposed to the existing access or parking arrangements.

- 11.3 The relevant issues which need to be considered are:
- Whether the principle of the development would comply with policy;
 - The impact upon the character and appearance of the area and the wider landscape;
 - Whether the proposal would result in an unacceptable level of activity at the site;
 - Highway safety; and
 - Neighbouring amenity
- 11.4 The demolition of the existing buildings at the site is considered to be acceptable as this would result in the removal of several unattractive structures. The proposed replacement facilities for the certified site are also likely to be acceptable, the building proposed would be modest in scale and of appropriate materials. However, the redevelopment of the studio building does raise concern. This building would be of domestic scale and appearance, compared to the collection of agricultural buildings presently at the site. It would have a ridge height of just over 5 metres, fairly extensive glazing, and a floorspace of 90 square metres.
- 11.5 Whilst Policy CP14 permits small scale employment development outside the defined villages, this would be in cases where it would help the well-being of local communities through the re-use or extension of existing buildings, the redevelopment of existing business uses or through farm diversification schemes. The business should also contribute to the land-based economy and help with the understanding and enjoyment of the National Park. Policy DP17 seeks to maintain existing non-residential uses and buildings while avoiding adverse impacts upon the National Park arising from additional activity, such as increased visitors and traffic, which is considered relevant in this instance given the nature of the use for which consent is sought. The policy therefore seeks to ensure that development is achieved with minimal impact upon the physical appearance / prominence of the site and that it would not materially increase the level of impact of the activity at the site.
- 11.6 Notwithstanding the size of the landholding within the applicant's ownership, there is little or no agricultural activity at the site, and therefore it would be difficult to accept this proposal as supporting any farm diversification. It would introduce a new business activity into the countryside which, whilst described as being small scale, would generate additional activity more than would be expected with home-working. Once present in the landscape, a building of this size and flexibility of use could reasonably require employees. The additional vehicular activity associated with the

business use would also harm the amenities of the occupiers of the other dwellings who currently share the gravel track, through increased traffic causing noise and disturbance along the single width shared access past several properties.

11.7 Woodlands is a rural area, with dispersed residential development in a landscape otherwise characterised by open countryside. The proposal is therefore unlikely to be confined to being used solely by the sparse local community, and therefore it would be difficult to argue that it would help the well-being of this community, nor that of the adjoining neighbours, notwithstanding the applicant's suggestion that it would.

11.8 A similar scheme for a therapy centre on land adjoining Sydney Cottage at Plaitford was recently dismissed at appeal, with the Inspector making the following relevant comments:

"Policy CP14 of the Core Strategy aims to restrict small scale employment development outside of the defined villages to that which helps the well-being of local communities. Such schemes will be permitted through the re-use or extension of existing buildings, the redevelopment of existing business use employment sites, farm diversification or home-working. The proposal would provide a service that could be considered to help the well-being of the local community. However, the proposal would be a new building, as opposed to a conversion, and would not form part of an existing employment site or farm. Nor could it be considered to be home working. Consequently, the proposal would not meet the requirements of Policy CP14...."

"I have considered whether the development could be considered a local community facility under Policy CP10 of the Core Strategy, which supports proposals which are of clear and direct benefit to the local village or rural community. However, the development would be a commercial venture as opposed to a community facility. Whilst it would offer a service, the holistic centre would not be a clear and direct community benefit to the local population and consequently it would not meet the aims of the policy."

11.9 It is considered that the same case would apply here. The Authority is experiencing growing pressure for similar proposals, which are not considered to be sustainably located in the open countryside of the National Park.

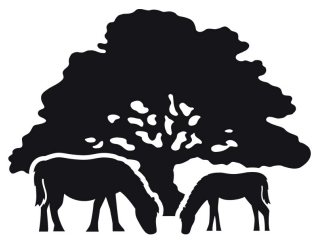
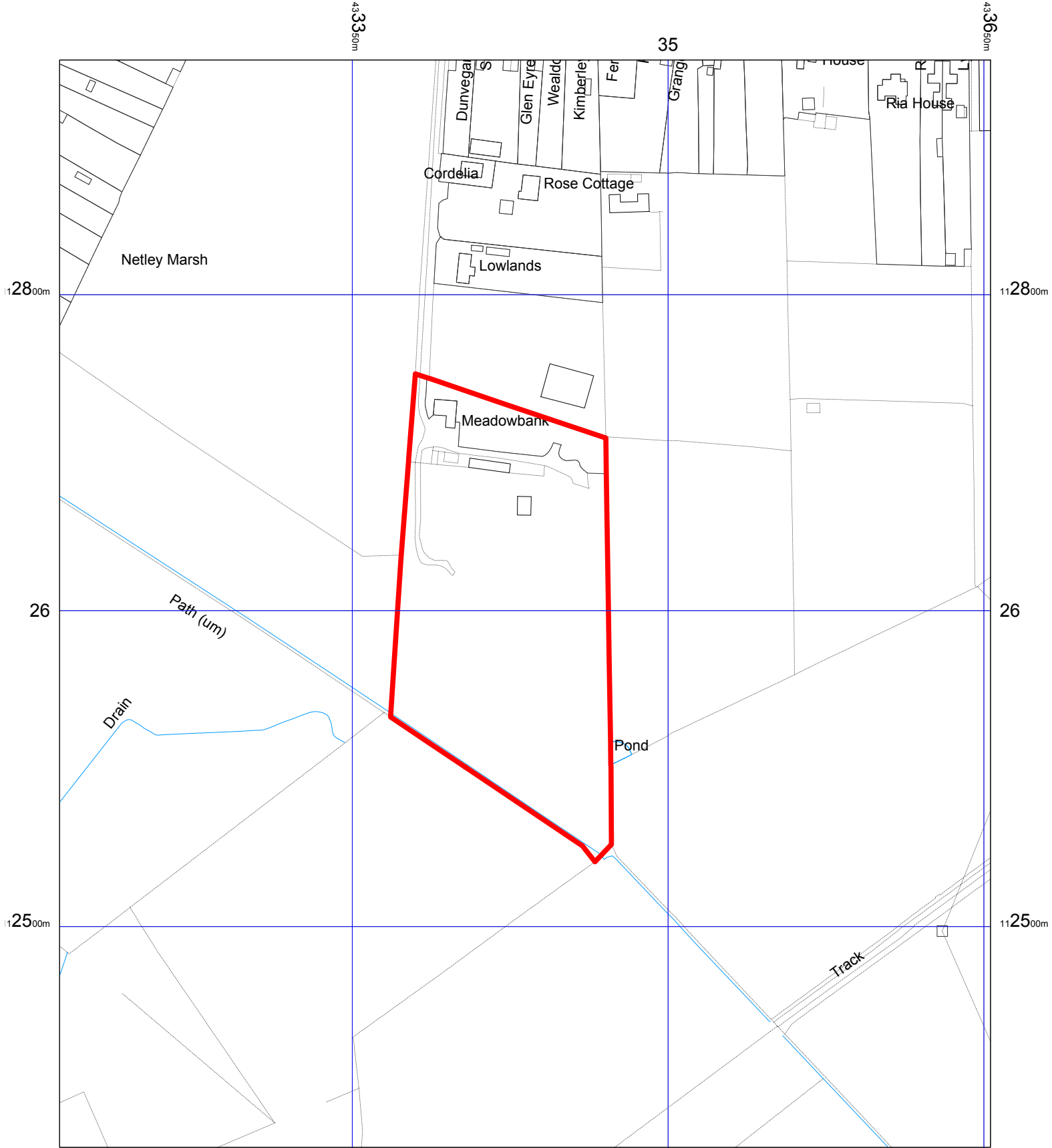
11.10 Although the proposed small replacement facilities building would be acceptable, the therapy studio would not, because it would introduce a new business activity in the countryside unassociated with agriculture or the land-based economy of the New Forest. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

12. RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

Reason(s)

- 1 The proposed development would introduce a new business activity into the New Forest outside the defined villages which would neither support the well-being of the local community, nor maintain the land-based economy or cultural heritage of the National Park. It fails to demonstrate how the development would be small scale and could be achieved without having an adverse impact on the overall physical appearance and prominence of the site. This would be compounded by the significant intensification and level of activity generated by the use which would also have an unacceptable impact upon the character and appearance of the countryside to the detriment of the Park's special qualities. In addition, it would also introduce additional activity into a tranquil area of limited residential development, which would be detrimental to the character and amenities of the adjacent residential development through increased noise and disturbance. The proposal would therefore be contrary to policies CP14, DP1 and DP17 of the New Forest National Park Authority Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (DPD) (December 2010).



NEW FOREST
NATIONAL PARK

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